IMPACT OF PHYSICAL HEALTH OF ANTENATAL MOTHERS ON THEIR NEONATES

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Abstract

A correlational study was conducted to assess the impact of physical health status of antenatal mothers on their neonates, born in a selected hospital at Mangalore. The problem was investigated through an exploratory survey approach and a correlational design. 100 antenatal mothers and their neonates were selected through purposive sampling. The study concluded that weight of the neonate has positive association with weight, gestational week of the mother (r = 0.196, 0.279, t = 0.195) and has positive correlation with the height of the mother (0.336, t = 0.195). Length, Head Circumference (HC), and Chest Circumference (CC) of the neonate had direct correlation with the gestational week of the mother (r= 0.395, 0.213, 0.237, t = 0.195), also has a direct significance with the height of the mother (r = 0.382, 0.267, 0.232, t = 0.195). HC and length of the neonate has correlation with the weight of the mother (r = 0.237, 0.243, t = 0.195). Gestational age of the neonate (Ballard score) has direct correlation with its weight (r = 0.521, t = 0.195).

Keyword: Chest Circumference (CC), Head Circumference (HC), Length, Weight, Height, Gestational week.

Background

In many communities, mothers and children constitute a priority group. They comprise approximately 70% of the population of the developing countries. Pregnancy and childbirth are physical phenomena, yet they predispose a woman to several health hazards. Preventive medicine will ensure that throughout pregnancy and puerperium, every mother will have good health and every pregnancy may ultimately result in a healthy mother and neonate. Various factors may influence the magnitude of maternal morbidity and obstetric complications which further lead to unfavourable outcomes of pregnancy such as high incidence of abortions, intrauterine deaths, pre and post-term deliveries and low birth weight babies. Although the levels of infant and child mortality are falling in the world, these are still high in India, especially in its under developed north-central states. The data of family health survey, 1998-99 (NFHS-2) reveals that about 69 in 1000 live births did not see their first birthday. **Ghosh**

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Saswata(2003) identified 5 groups of proximate determinants of child health: factors related to the mother: age, parity, birth interval, environment pollution, nutritional deficiency, injury and personal illness.

Need of the Study

Health status of an antenatal mother is an important determinant of the child's survival and health. Good care, nutrition, physical exercise and mental make up will result in a healthy baby. Analysis and timely management of the mother's health in pregnancy will improve the child's safety. Most of the women in India live in villages and many of them lack knowledge and awareness of the importance of antenatal care. Though healthcare facilities are spread out, yet, poor antenatal outcome has been found to have resulted in the perinatal, neonatal and infant mortality. The simple indicators of the mother like haemoglobin level, height, weight, gestational age of the mother will give the first hand information of deviated health in neonates. The association between birth weight with maternal age and parity with other anthropometric measures signifies the importance of the maternal and neonatal assessment. Mean birth weight, length, head